

Remarks

The Office Action of March 31, 2008 has been carefully considered. Claims 1 - 4, and 15 - 16 are cancelled. Claim 13 is amended and new Claims 17 - 21 are added. Claims 5 - 13 and 17 - 21 are currently pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1 - 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as not reasonably providing enablement for "functional aromatic, heteroaromatic or heterocyclic groups . . . where the functional groups are selected from". While the Applicants do not agree with this rejection, Claim 1 is cancelled thereby rendering the rejection moot.

Claim 5, and the remaining claims, does not recite "a2" using the rejected terminology. Instead, Claim 5 recites "olefinically unsaturated monomers having functional groups selected from the group consisting of hydroxyl groups, sulfonic acid groups, ester groups, ether groups, anhydride groups, epoxy groups, amide groups and amino groups, or having aromatic, heteroaromatic and/or heterocyclic groups."

The specification is enabled for a2 recited as in Claim 5. Support and ample description for "a2" as recited in Claim 5 can be found throughout the specification and in particular at paragraphs 9, 15-19. Removal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 1 - 4 and 13 - 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. This rejection is rendered moot as Claim 1 and its dependent claims are cancelled.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 - 4 and 13 - 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. 2001/0012596 to Kunimoto et al. and U.S. 6,635,690 to Heilmann et al. This rejection is rendered moot as Claim 1 and its dependent claims are cancelled.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 - 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Massow et al (5,194,455) in view of Birbaum et al (6,057,380). This rejection is traversed.

With regard to the process of Claim 5, the Applicants assert that the Office Action fails to make a prima facie case of obviousness. The remaining claims are dependent on Claim 5. The references fail to teach or suggest all of the claimed elements. Specifically, neither reference teach or suggest that the composition is coated onto a backing and subsequently crosslinked thermally by the reaction of at least component a3) with the base as recited in claim 5. The Office Action does not identify where in the references this feature is disclosed.

This recited step is not only different from the processes described in the cited references, it is important as it produces a different product from that taught in Birbaum et al. or Massow et al. Thermal crosslinked adhesives differ from radiation induced crosslinked adhesives because radiation has a limited intrusion depth into the adhesive and the rate of radiation is dependent on the location in the adhesive layer. As a result, radiation crosslinked adhesives have a profile of their properties and are not homogenous. In contrast, heat (as initiator for thermally running processes) is able to penetrate the adhesive more homogeneously producing a layer that is more uniformly crosslinked.

Removal of the rejection is requested.


Conclusion

The instant application is believed to be in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance of Claims 5 - 13 and 17 - 21 is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (908) 722-0700 if it is believed that further discussions, and/or additional amendment would help advance the prosecution of the instant application.

If any extension of time for this response is required, applicants request that this be considered a petition therefore. Please charge any required petition fee to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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